

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT (WIA)
Office of the Senior Advisor to the Governor for Workforce
Governor's Statewide 15% Discretionary Fund Guidelines for Optional Activities
August 2006

Purpose of the WIA

To provide workforce investment activities, through statewide and local workforce investment systems, that increase the employment, retention and earnings of participants, and increase occupational skill attainment by participants, and, as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation.

To Accomplish the Purpose, the WIA does Five Things

(1) It creates a state workforce development system composed of leadership, policy and governance elements and a partnership between the Governor and the business community; (2) it creates a local One Stop service Delivery System, composed of mandatory and optional partner programs led by a business-local governance partnership between Local Elected Officials and the private sector; (3) it creates a local workforce training program for adults, youth and dislocated workers (Title I); (4) it amends three related federal workforce training programs: Adult Education & Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and the Rehabilitative Services Act; and (4) it creates five national workforce training programs: Native Americans, Migrant & Seasonal Farm Workers, Job Corps, Veterans and Youth Opportunity Grants.

Definition of Virginia's Workforce Development System

In March 2006, the Virginia Workforce Council adopted a definition of Virginia's workforce system, which is:

The Virginia Workforce Development System provides the policy, program and service intervention framework for the delivery of workforce activities at the State and local levels to individuals who need those services, including job seekers, dislocated workers, youth, incumbent workers, new entrants to the workforce and employers.

The 15% Governor's Statewide Discretionary Funds

From the WIA Title I local program annual allocation for adults, youth and dislocated workers, 15 percent of the allocation is reserved for expenditure by the Governor's on certain statewide required and optional activities. The state may also carry over WIA funds for three years and these carryover 15% funds are added to each year's annual allocation.

The **required activities** are:

- ◆ Operating a fiscal and management accountability information system.

- ◆ Assistance in establishment and operation of the one stop delivery system.
- ◆ Incentive grants for local areas for regional cooperation, local coordination and exemplary performance.
- ◆ Technical assistance to local areas that fail to meet performance measures.
- ◆ Additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible youth.
- ◆ Dissemination of eligible training provider information, including cost and performance.
- ◆ On going evaluation studies of workforce investment activities carried out in the State in order to promote, establish, implement and utilize methods for continuously improving the activities in order to achieve high-level performance within, and high-level outcomes from, the statewide workforce investment system.

The **optional activities** are:

- ◆ Programs targeted to empowerment zones and enterprise communities.
- ◆ Programs to increase training and placement of individuals in nontraditional employment.
- ◆ Capacity building and technical assistance to local areas, one-stop operators, one-stop partners and eligible providers, including the development and training of staff and the development of exemplary program activities.
- ◆ Conduct research and demonstrations.
- ◆ Innovative incumbent worker training programs, which may include employer loan programs to assist in skills upgrading.
- ◆ Identification of eligible training providers.
- ◆ Innovative programs for displaced homemakers, which include TANF recipients within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility.
- ◆ State administration (5% maximum)
- ◆ Other activities to assist local areas in carrying out employment and training activities through the state workforce investment system.

Project Eligibility for WIA 15% Statewide Discretionary Funds for Optional Activities

The following criteria will be applied in consideration of the award of the Governor's statewide 15% WIA discretionary funds for optional activities.

- ◆ Funds will not be used to support on-going agency or organizational activities.
- ◆ Activities to be funded must relate to the purpose of the WIA and the optional use of WIA discretionary funds.
- ◆ Funds will be awarded based on performance and outcomes.
- ◆ Funds must leverage other funds other than the 15% WIA discretionary funds.
- ◆ Activities to be funded must be coordinated with the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and the One Stop Service Delivery Centers at the local level.
- ◆ Funds will be awarded on a one-time basis, with exceptions related to the Governor's workforce agenda. Funds will not be awarded more than once to an entity that did not meet performance or outcomes measures.
- ◆ Activities to be funded will support the Governor's Workforce Development Strategic Plan.
- ◆ Activities to be funded cannot duplicate services provided through the Virginia Workforce Network, which is the state's One Stop Service Delivery Center System. Activities to be funded can embellish and enhance the Virginia Workforce Network.

- ◆ Applications must be made for the funds according to the directions and guidelines provided by the Senior Advisor to the Governor for Workforce.
- ◆ Applicants must assure their ability to properly manage federal funds to protect the integrity of the funds. The award of funds will be done through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the applicant and the Office of the Senior Advisor. The fiscal agent for the WIA funds will also be a party to the MOU.

Guiding Principles

Grants are made at the discretion of the Governor on advice from the Senior Advisor to the Governor for Workforce. The Senior Advisor will consult the Virginia Workforce Council prior to making recommendations to the Governor on the award of funds. The WIA discretionary funds provide the Governor flexibility and leverage in addressing the myriad of workforce needs in the diverse regions of the state based on economic demand. The Governor places a priority on performance and outcome measures. These outcome measures should relate to employment and increased wages. Further, the Governor encourages regional cooperation among jurisdictions. Additionally, achieving parity of skill level among individuals in diverse areas of the state is imperative and projects which address skills upgrade for low-skilled adults will receive special attention.

These funds are also directed at building the capacity and continuous improvement of Virginia's workforce development system. Innovation and demonstration projects, which focus on best or promising practices, are encouraged.

Fund Availability

The Senior Advisor will determine the amount of discretionary funds to be spent on required activities and state administration.

The average fund availability for the WIA statewide discretionary fund for optional activities has been \$4 million a year. With decreasing federal allotments and rescissions, this amount will decrease. Multiple projects with the same organization or for the same purpose will be discouraged, unless the Governor determines the priority of the effort. Projects will rarely be funded for over \$300,000. This ensures a substantial amount of fund availability for the myriad of diverse workforce needs throughout the state.

Any questions regarding preparation of an application should be directed to: Paula Dehetre, Workforce Development Systems Manager, Governor's Office on Workforce, Old City Hall, 1001 East Broad Street, Suite 135, Richmond, VA 23219 (Phone: (804) 2254114; email: Paula.Dehetre@governor.virginia.gov)